

nt&castle

# Homes for Heygate

residents rehousing pack



*Southwark*  
Council

## Foreword

# Heygate residents rehousing pack



Cllr Catherine Bowman,  
Deputy Leader, Southwark Council

Earlier this year, the council set out its plans to regenerate Elephant and Castle and build new homes for everyone living on the Heygate Estate.

Since then, many of you have taken the time to read our newsletters, attend meetings and exhibitions and tell us what you think of those proposals.

Now we have started the search to find housing associations that can design, build and then manage your new homes.

As your current landlord, we know that you want to live in a comfortable, well designed home at the Elephant and Castle. We share that ambition and have made sure that the construction of your new homes is the first thing that happens in this regeneration scheme.

But before housing associations are brought on board, we need to know much more about the kind of new homes that you will need.

In the coming months, specialist housing officers will be interviewing every resident on the estate. They need to find out things like how many bedrooms you will need, whether you have any medical problems that might affect where you live and which of the early housing sites would be your first choice to move to. This process is called referencing.

The enclosed kit contains lots of information about the referencing process and the regeneration plans. It has been sent to everyone living on the estate and is an important document. Please take the time to read it or call the regeneration team if you have any questions.

Best wishes

**Cllr Catherine Bowman**  
Deputy Leader, Southwark Council

# Section A.1

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## Section A.3

# Introduction – your rehousing pack explained

Over the last eighteen months, we have issued a range of leaflets and newsletters, and organised a number of meetings and events, to inform you of the council's plans to regenerate Elephant and Castle. Heygate Estate will be demolished as part of these plans and residents given the chance to move into new homes in the Elephant and Castle area.

We are sending this rehousing pack to all tenants of Heygate Estate and this formally signals the start of the rehousing process. The pack has been created to help explain this process to you, describe the two main rehousing options which are available, and assist you in deciding which option is most suitable for you.

The pack contains a number of separate sections, each covering a different subject relating to the rehousing process. It is important that you take the time over the next few weeks to read through each section carefully. This will enable you to decide which area you would like to move to and what you'll need from your new home.

The different sections in the pack are summarised below:

### **Section B.1**

In this first section you'll find contact details for the Heygate rehousing project team.

### **Section C.1**

This section explains why Heygate residents are being rehoused and gives an overview of the two main rehousing options available to you. It also explains the referencing and registration process (when you'll meet with a council officer to establish your rehousing needs).

### **Section C.2**

This section provides you with more detailed information about the rehousing options, and contains information about housing associations.

### **Section C.3**

Detailed information is provided about the new housing association sites, including maps and descriptions of the areas.

### **Section C.4**

In this section we have provided a programme and timetable for the rehousing process. This outlines when you are scheduled to receive a visit from the council's rehousing team and sets out approximate dates of when you are likely to be rehoused.

### **Section C.5**

In this section various alternative rehousing schemes are listed.

### **Section C.6**

This section explains what happens when an offer is made, either to a council or housing association property, and advises what you will be required to do at this point in time.

### **Section C.7**

This section explains how the council will compensate you financially for the loss of your home and assist you with moving.

### **Section C.8**

This section contains the council's current policy explaining who can register for housing. This will help you in completing your housing registration form.

### **Section D.1**

This section contains a glossary explaining unfamiliar words or terms that you may encounter within the pack.

### **Section D.2**

This final section includes a list of useful contacts for further information about the regeneration.

The pack has been produced in a ring-binder format to enable you to insert additional information that you'll receive over time. A separate section has been left empty for you at the end of the pack for you to store your paperwork safely.

## Section B.1

# The rehousing team

A team of specialised project officers has been appointed to manage the rehousing of residents from Heygate Estate and to assist residents through the process. This team is based within the local housing office. If you have any questions about the information contained within this pack please contact a member of the rehousing team at Rodney Road neighbourhood office, Content Street, London SE17 1NS.

### **The team members are:**

**John Cundall (Team Leader)**

Tel: 020 7525 2620

Email: john.cundall@southwark.gov.uk

**Richard Adussah**

Tel: 020 7525 2603

Email: richard.adussah@southwark.gov.uk

**Hema Vashi**

Tel: 020 7525 2630

Email: hema.vashi@southwark.gov.uk

### **Currently vacant post**

Tel: 020 7525 2641

Email:

You may also wish to seek independent advice about the information contained within this pack. The contact details of some of the advice centres based within the local area can be found at the end of this pack in the useful contacts section.

## Section C.1

# An introduction to the rehousing process

**Southwark Council has adopted a masterplan for the regeneration of the Elephant and Castle area to provide a new town centre, containing new commercial and leisure facilities, an updated transport interchange and 5,300 new homes. The demolition of the Heygate Estate is an essential part of this masterplan and rehousing Heygate residents is the first priority of the regeneration.**

The council's plans are set out within the Elephant and Castle framework for development, which was approved by the council on 19 February 2004. This document is available free on CD Rom from the Elephant and Castle project team, based at Coburg House, 63-67 Newington Causeway, London SE1 6BD. The team can also be contacted by phone on 020 7525 4922 or by email to [elephantinfo@southwark.gov.uk](mailto:elephantinfo@southwark.gov.uk). Alternatively you may download the document from the website [www.elephantandcastle.org.uk](http://www.elephantandcastle.org.uk)

### **Why is Heygate Estate being demolished?**

The Heygate Estate is at the heart of the Elephant and Castle regeneration. The regeneration offers a rare opportunity to build new homes for all Heygate tenants in the Elephant and Castle area. Research shows that the Heygate Estate is unpopular with many residents. The Heygate was built in the early 1970s and now needs massive investment to meet the government's decent homes target. The council does not have the resources to refurbish the homes to modern day standards of heating, accessibility and security, and the design of the estate also means that it would not be financially viable to do this. The council has therefore committed to the provision of 1100 new homes designed and built for Heygate tenants as part of the regeneration scheme.

### **Where will Heygate residents be rehoused?**

As the council is demolishing the estate completely, the Heygate will no longer exist and tenants will therefore not be able to 'return' to the estate. The council has not yet developed firm proposals for the land where Heygate sits, but it is likely that it will be redeveloped as shops, public space, and eventually, housing for sale and rent.

The council will be working in partnership with a housing association, or a group of housing associations, to build 1100 new homes for Heygate tenants on approximately 15 sites in and around the Elephant and Castle area. More information on housing associations is provided later in this pack, in section C.2.

Every Heygate tenant who wants to move to a new housing association home will be able to, and you'll be able to select from four areas that we've grouped the sites into. Some residents may prefer to remain tenants of the council. The two options available to you are described below.

### **Your two rehousing options are:**

- To be rehoused permanently to a new housing association property - you will be able to choose from four main groups of sites located in and around the Elephant and Castle area.
- To be rehoused permanently within an existing council property, within the borough.

Further details about these options and other rehousing information are provided within this pack. The rehousing project officers will be able to answer any queries and provide you with all the information you need to make an informed choice.

### **The council's decent policy**

The two options described above have been agreed by the council as part of its decent policy for Heygate Estate. The term decent refers to process of rehousing tenants. However in this pack we generally use the term rehousing instead.

The council has a decent policy in place to cover all estate regeneration schemes where tenants have to be transferred from their existing property and do not have the option to return to their homes due to demolition or major refurbishment programmes.

The decent policy for Heygate estate was agreed by the council's Executive Committee on 18 May 2004. The policy requires that sufficient replacement properties are provided to rehouse Heygate tenants, because everyone will be required to move, but the main aspects of the policy are:

- 1100 new homes will be built by housing associations. Assessment of the housing needs of tenants will inform the size and type of new properties to be built, and will ensure there are sufficient properties to rehouse all tenants who select this option.
- All tenants will be asked to decide which rehousing route they would like to follow: either moving to a new housing association property, or to existing council housing within the borough. To ensure the council can make arrangements for everybody, this decision will be binding. Tenants will be asked to make this decision when they complete their housing registration forms. **This process is described later in the pack.**
- Tenants who wish to remain as council tenants will be offered alternative accommodation within an existing council property.
- In certain circumstances, tenants currently under-occupying their property and who are not in rent arrears may be offered an extra bedroom over their assessed housing needs. This will apply to both the new housing association and the existing council option and will be subject to the resources being available. The first priority would be given to those moving to their correct bed size, and therefore those wanting an extra bedroom would be likely to wait longer for a move.

### **The rehousing programme**

The first stage of the Heygate rehousing process has already started with the council's adoption of a new decant policy for Heygate, the recruitment of the specialist rehousing team and the production and delivery of this pack.

In autumn 2004 the rehousing team will start to visit every tenant on the estate. The council will also commence the selection of the best housing association partner, or partners, to build and manage the new homes for Heygate residents at Elephant and Castle. The first new replacement homes for Heygate tenants should be completed by 2007.

A more detailed phasing plan is provided later in this pack, in section C.4.

### **The visit from the rehousing team**

The next stage of the rehousing process is when an officer from the Heygate rehousing team will meet you in your home to begin assessing your housing needs. These visits will begin in the new few weeks and you will receive an appointment letter from a member of the rehousing team. If, for any reason, you are unable to make this appointment it is important that you contact the team to arrange an alternative date.

#### **The assessment of your housing needs will be based on:**

- the size of your family
- the age and sex of all family members
- an assessment of any medical conditions affecting any family members

This process is called referencing.

The purpose of this visit is to allow the council to make an initial assessment of your housing needs, and to give you the opportunity to ask questions about the contents of this pack and the various rehousing options available to you. During the visit your rehousing project officer will fill in a housing referencing questionnaire, which will include basic information regarding your family size and housing needs.

**You will not be asked at this stage to decide which rehousing option you would prefer. You will however be required to make this binding decision when you fill in and submit your housing registration form.**

Your rehousing project officer will leave a copy of the housing registration form with you, and will talk through the form to make sure you understand how it should be filled in - and what supporting information will need to be sent in with it.

## **Completing your registration form**

As soon as possible after your visit from the rehousing team, you will be required to hand in your registration form to the Rodney Road neighbourhood office. This will enable the council to confirm your application and register your details on the housing system. It is usually easier to come into the office to do this because you will have the opportunity to ask questions or get help in filling in the form, as well as getting your documents photocopied. Details of the opening hours of the neighbourhood office are provided within this pack.

You may send your form into the office, but you'll have to arrange to get your documents photocopied yourself. If you are physically unable to come to the office, one of the rehousing team will arrange to collect your form and documents from your home, photocopy them and bring them back to you.

It is very important that we have the correct information about your household included in your registration form. This will include:

- any medical conditions that might affect the type of property you need.
- where you want to live and if there are any reasons why you cannot live in a certain area.
- details about the size of your family and the sex and age of all members so that we can work out the right size property for you.

The property offered to you will be based on the needs assessment carried out, so it's crucial that we get it right. You should refer to the section of this pack called 'Housing Registrations – who can I register to live with me?' for further information on how this process works.

If you or a member of your family has a medical condition that affects your housing needs, you must make sure that you inform your rehousing project officer, who will arrange for an assessment by the medical rehousing team. You will need to complete a form explaining the medical condition and giving us permission to contact your GP. You should complete this form and return it in the pre-paid envelope provided. This information is strictly confidential and any medical information provided will only be seen by our medical rehousing unit. The neighbourhood officers will not know the contents of your medical application - only the results of the assessment.

Once all the relevant information has been collected, together with any proof that we have asked for, your application will be registered. The council will use the information you have given us to draft detailed plans for the new housing sites.

## **The decisions you will be asked to make**

The housing registration form will ask you to make two decisions:

Whether you wish to remain a council tenant and move to an existing council property or whether you wish to move to a new housing association property. **This decision will be binding.**

You will also be asked to state your preferred areas of choice. If you wish to remain with the council you will be asked to state a minimum of 6 out of 21 areas across the borough. If you wish to move to a new housing association property you will be asked to state your area of first choice and any secondary preferences. Information about the different areas is provided later in this pack.

The council needs you to make these decisions so that we can draw up detailed plans for the new housing sites. We need to know the level of demand for each of the new housing areas, as well as the detailed housing needs of all those households wishing to move to each area. If you choose to remain a council tenant, we need to know which lettings areas will be in greatest demand.

While there is a reasonable chance of meeting your preferred areas of choice, we are unable to guarantee that if you opt to move to a new housing association home, we will be able to rehouse you on a specific site within that area. There is also a high demand for one particular area, we will not be able to satisfy everyone's first choice and you may be made an offer in your second area of choice.

Please note - if your household or circumstances change you must let us know immediately as this will affect your offer of accommodation. Contact a member of the project team on 020 7525 2620.

## **Your rehousing options in more detail**

As outlined earlier in this pack your two rehousing options are as follows:

1. To be rehoused permanently to a new housing association property - you will be able to choose from four main groups of sites located in and around the Elephant and Castle area.
2. To be rehoused permanently within an existing council property, within the borough.

These are explained in greater detail in Section C.2.

## Section C.2

# Detailed information about your rehousing options

### Option one

To be rehoused permanently in a new housing association property.

This option means that you will be rehoused in a new property that will be built on one of approximately 15 identified sites in and around the Elephant Castle area. These properties will be built and managed by a housing association or a group of housing associations working in partnership with the council. These partners have not yet been chosen but they will be selected carefully, in line with a number of very strict standards and criteria.

Tenants who choose this option will be rehoused within one of four areas known as:

**Area One: St. George's area**

**Area Two: Harper Road**

**Area Three: Rodney Road**

**Area Four: South Newington**

Information on individual sites and each of the four areas is included in section C.3.

You will be asked to select one of the four areas, and you can also express a preference for an individual site within the area. The council cannot guarantee to offer you a property in your area of choice: this will depend on how many homes that can be built there and how many other Heygate residents are asking for the same area.

If you select this option you will become a housing association tenant. More detailed information about housing associations and the standards required for the homes is provided within this pack.

A new development built at Wansey Street will be used to demonstrate the types of properties that will be available for residents on the redeveloped sites. This development will provide approximately 25 units to rehouse Heygate residents.

### Detailed area and site information

Within each of the four areas, there are a number of individual sites on which the new housing association homes will be built. There are approximately 15 of these sites in total, across the four areas. Further detailed information on each of the sites is provided in section C.3 below.

The council cannot guarantee that you will be rehoused on a specific site within any of the four areas. However you will have the chance to state your preferences when you complete your housing registration form.

## **Information on Housing Associations**

In this section we have included some background information about housing associations to help you to decide if you wish to become a housing association tenant. Some commonly asked questions and answers about housing associations and how they operate are provided below:

### **What are housing associations?**

Housing associations, which are also known as Registered Social Landlords (RSLs), are independent not-for-profit organisations, which provide homes for people in housing need. Most new social housing in England is developed by housing associations. There are over 2,000 housing associations in England, currently managing around 2 million homes and housing more than 3.5 million people. Some housing associations have been in existence for more than 100 years.

### **Are housing associations private landlords?**

Housing associations are very different from private landlords. They are not private companies and they do not trade for profit for the benefit of their shareholders. They operate within the public sector for the benefit of the community and, like the council, are publicly accountable. Although they are run as businesses, housing associations plough any profits back into the organisation to maintain existing homes and to help build new ones.

### **How are housing associations regulated?**

Housing associations are independent of government but are monitored and regulated by the Housing Corporation, a government body. The Housing Corporation makes sure that housing associations follow the law and that their policies are fair. All of the Housing Corporation's requirements and standards are contained within its 'Regulatory Code', which is available for free (see the useful contacts section at the back of the pack for further details). Many of the older housing associations are registered charities and are therefore also regulated by the Charities Commission. The Housing Corporation inspects housing associations on a regular basis and has the powers to intervene if there are any problems.

### **Who runs housing associations?**

Most housing associations have a large body of staff that carry out the day-to-day work of the association. However the committee or board of management has overall responsibility for the work of the organisation. The committee or board is made up of a range of individuals including tenants, councillors, community representatives and people from a range of professions.

### **How are housing associations financed?**

Day-to-day services, such as management and repairs, are financed through income from rents and service charges. Housing associations use a combination of central government grants and loans or mortgages from banks and building societies to fund new developments or refurbishment programmes. Loan repayments are paid for from an association's rental income. Any surpluses are used to pay for future development or charitable activities.

### **What do housing associations do?**

Housing associations' main area of activity is developing and managing homes for people on lower incomes. However many associations are also involved in a range of community regeneration activities such as youth work and computer training. When the council selects a housing association partner for Elephant and Castle, we will be asking associations to demonstrate that they are able to offer these kinds of services to former Heygate residents.

### **Are housing association rents higher than council rents?**

In the past housing association rents in Southwark have tended to be slightly higher than the council's rents, and have varied from one association to another. However, in 2002 the government introduced a policy of convergence between housing association and council rents. This will ensure that the rents set by the council and by different housing associations are very similar in future. If you are moving to a brand new home as part of the scheme it is likely that your rent may be slightly higher than at the Heygate, to reflect the improved conditions and amenities. However your new rent will be set within both the government and Southwark Council's definition of 'affordable' and will be well below market rent levels. More information on rents and other charges, and future rent increases is provided later in the pack.

### **Will I keep my secure tenancy if I move to a housing association home?**

Some residents are concerned about whether their tenancies will be less secure if they move to a housing association property. Although housing association tenants have a different type of tenancy, called an assured tenancy, in practice this is very similar to the council's secure tenancy. Like secure tenants, assured tenants have statutory rights, which allow them to occupy their homes, protect them from eviction, and ensure that their landlords carry out repairs.

As well as the statutory rights provided by law, tenancy agreements may also contain some additional rights, which are agreed between the landlord and the tenant. These are known as 'contractual rights' and they can vary from one association to another. This is a key area, because when the council selects housing association partners for the Elephant and Castle regeneration, it will seek a contractual commitment to ensure that the housing association tenancy agreement is as close as possible to the council's tenancy agreement. In practice therefore, tenants moving into new housing association properties should notice very little difference in their rights.

The table below compares the two types of tenancy and highlights the main differences between them.

<b>Tenancy rights and conditions</b>	<b>Secure tenancy (council)</b>	<b>Assured tenancy (HA)</b>
Accountability	Through elected councillors and other participation arrangements	HAs are run by trustees or board members (often with resident representation)
Security of tenure – the right to live in your home without the threat of eviction without good cause and unless a possession order has been obtained from the court.	Yes	Yes
Succession – the right to pass on your tenancy when you die to a) your spouse or partner and b) another member of your family provided they were living with you at the time of death and it is their only or principal home (for 12 months if another member of the family).	Yes	Only applies to spouse or partner but many HAs extend this right on a contractual basis*.
A second right of succession – the right of the successor to pass on the tenancy when he/she dies, to the people described above.	Yes	No, but some HAs provide extended rights on a contractual basis*.
Assignment – the right to pass your tenancy while you are still alive to someone who would qualify to succeed to the tenancy on your death (with your landlord's consent).	Yes	No, but some HAs provide this right on a contractual basis*.
The right to buy your home at open market value with a discount (currently £16,000 maximum in London), once you have been a tenant of a local authority or housing association for two years.	Yes, known as the 'Right to Buy'	The council will require HAs to provide the 'Right to Acquire' (very similar to Right to Buy) on a contractual basis.
Mutual exchange – the right to exchange your property with other council or housing association tenants (including swapping between the two types of landlord).	Yes	Yes
Rent to mortgage – the right to buy your property via the rent to mortgage scheme. This allows the tenant to purchase a reduced interest in the property, in stages.	Yes	No, this does not apply to HA tenants.
The right to take in lodgers or sublet part of your property (with your landlord's consent)	Yes	Yes
The right to have repairs carried out within certain timescales.	Yes	Yes
The right to make certain improvements and receive compensation for them (with landlord's consent).	Yes	Yes

Tenancy rights and conditions	Secure tenancy (council)	Assured tenancy (HA)
The right to carry out repairs where the landlord has failed to meet the targeted timescale, and be compensated for the costs of these.	Yes	Yes
The right to be given information about the management of your home.	Yes	Yes
The right to consultation.	Yes	Yes
The right not to have your tenancy agreement amended (other than change in rent or service charges) without your agreement.	Yes	Yes
The right to manage your home (for example, through a Tenant Management Organisation).	Yes	No, this does not apply to HA tenants.
The right to quiet enjoyment of your home	Yes	Yes
The right to keep certain pets and animals (with landlords consent)	Yes	Yes, although most HAs require written permission*
Arbitration - the right to refer to Arbitration Tribunal	Yes	No, complaints are normally dealt with under the HA's internal complaints policy or by referral to the Independent Housing Ombudsman*

\*Where the conditions of a housing association assured policy differ from those within the council's secure tenancy, the council will be seeking to ensure that the housing association extends these rights to match the council's existing secure tenancy as far as possible.

### Housing association management standards

The Housing Corporation, the organisation that regulates housing associations, sets the standard of housing management that all associations have to comply with. These are set out in the Corporation's regulatory code. The Housing Corporation has also published a leaflet for tenants which explains all the standards that they should expect when they move into a housing association property. This publication is called A Charter for Housing Association Applicants and Residents (September 2003) and is available for free from the Housing Corporation (details in the useful contacts section).

In addition, as part of the housing association selection process, the council will seek to ensure that housing associations offer a management service which is at least as good as the service currently provided by the council. The policies and procedures of the housing association should not make tenants any worse off than they are at present, in terms of the standards of management they can expect from their landlord. The council will be asking housing associations to provide a similar, or improved, service in all of the areas listed below:

- location of a local office (for reporting repairs and paying rent)
- methods of paying rent
- repairs service
- tenant consultation
- resident representation on board of management
- policy and procedures for transferring to a new home within the housing association, if required at a later stage
- tenancy management service (for example, dealing with anti-social behaviour)
- estate management and the maintenance of any lifts, gardens or other shared facilities on the new properties.
- complaints procedure
- arbitration

## **Option two**

**To be rehoused permanently within existing council stock.**

This option would involve you being rehoused in an existing council property within Southwark. You will be required to select a minimum 6 out of a possible 21 areas to assist us to meet your household needs.

If you select this option you will remain a council tenant.

## **Other rehousing options**

From now until the decant process actively starts, any tenant may register for a transfer from the Heygate in the normal way, or consider any alternative rehousing schemes which are currently available. These are described in detail in section C.5 of this pack. Your application under any of these schemes will be considered alongside other competing demands and will not receive any extra priority because of the Heygate scheme. Also, you will not be eligible for compensation payments for home loss and disturbance if you move before the phased decanting of your block commences.

Please note that even if you wish to pursue any of the alternative rehousing routes in the meantime, you will still select one of the two main options offered as part of the regeneration project. This is to ensure that the council is able to make you an offer of housing within the regeneration scheme if you have not managed to secure rehousing by any alternative route. In this event you will still be eligible for an offer made under whichever one of the two main options you have chosen. It is not likely that you will be able to pursue any of these options once the rehousing of your block becomes active. Your rehousing project officer will be able to give you further advice on this.

## **Housing association and council rents**

### **How rents are set**

In this section we have provided you with some background information about how rents and service charges are determined, both within the council and in housing associations. We have also given you a list of all of the various charges that you would expect to pay if you were to remain with the council or move to a housing association property.

The way that the council and housing associations set their rents is very similar. The Government introduced a policy of convergence between local authority rents and housing association rents in 2002. The aim is to ensure that tenants of social housing in an area pay the same rent for similar properties in the same area. Rents are calculated by using a combination of the following information: the value of the property, the size and number of bedrooms, and the type of property it is (floor level, garden etc).

The objectives of this 'harmonisation' are:

- rents should remain affordable in the long term;
- rents should be fair and less confusing;
- there should be a closer link between the rent and the quality of the property
- there should be no unjustifiable difference between housing association and council rents.

Rent convergence is to happen over 10 years, starting in 2002. The upper limit to be reached is known as the target rent. There is a limit to the amount that housing associations or councils can increase their rents each year, but all rents are expected to reach target levels by 2012. All local authorities and housing associations are working to implement the regulations and are receiving ongoing guidance from government.

As part of the housing association selection process, the council will ask housing associations to state what their rents will be for the first year of lettings, and how they intend to increase their rents over the following years. The housing association's rents will be expected to comply with the government's guidelines on affordable rents.

### **How service charges are set**

Housing associations and local authorities also charge for any additional services that they provide on top of the basic rent. These are known as 'service charges' and they include, for example, the cost of providing entry-phone systems, cleaning and maintaining the common parts of the block and estate lighting. Housing associations also include lift maintenance as a service charge whereas councils charge for this within the rent.

The council used to pool these charges and include them with the rent, whereas housing associations have to charge a share of the actual costs of providing the service. However the government's rent policy now requires councils to itemise the charge separately as you will have seen on your rent card. Southwark council is now moving away from pooled service charges and is planning to introduce charging of actual costs, just like housing associations do.

### **How you can pay your rent**

Most housing associations offer a number of different methods of paying your rent, including direct debit, standing orders, and payments at local pay points such as post offices. When the council selects a housing association partner, we will seek to ensure that tenants are given as wide a range of methods to pay their rent as they have as a council tenant.

### **Housing benefit**

If you are currently in receipt of housing benefit you will still be able to claim this if you move to a housing association property. You can also arrange to have your housing benefit paid direct to the landlord if you prefer. Regardless of whether you move to a new housing association property or to an existing council property, you will have to fill in a new housing benefit application when you move to your new home. Your rehousing project officer will be able to advise you on this.

### **Other charges**

Whether you move to a new housing association property or an existing council property, there will be a number of other charges that you will need to pay in addition to your rent and service charge, including:

- heating and hot water (if you are on a district heating system)
- gas and electricity supplies, including for heating if not a district system
- water – all new properties will have water meters
- council tax
- contents insurance
- parking

## **A description of your new home**

This section outlines a description of the type of property that you can expect to move to as part of the Heygate rehousing programme. The type of home you end up living in will depend largely upon whether you opt to remain a tenant of the council or whether you decide to move to a new housing association home.

### **Option one – a housing association home**

#### **General Description**

If you opt to move to a housing association home you will be offered a brand new home, built to modern day standards of security, heat and sound insulation. The majority of the new properties will be flats, within developments that will be much smaller than Heygate Estate. The majority of new homes will be built as flats and maisonettes and the number of storeys in each block will vary from site to site. No studios or bedsits will be developed as part of the Heygate rehousing scheme. Most of the new blocks will be built on a traditional street layout, with the main doors entering directly from the street. All new units will have secure entry-phone systems to restrict access to residents and visitors only.

Almost all of the new development sites will contain a mix of homes, both for rent and for sale. These will be designed so that it will not be possible to tell from the outside of the properties which of them are rented and which have been sold.

The type of housing association home you are offered will depend upon your family size and any medical needs. You are unlikely to be offered a ground floor property unless you have a medical reason for needing one. However most of the new blocks of flats will have lifts which will be built to robust modern day standards, and the majority of the upper floor flats will have a private balcony.

#### **Property size**

Again, the size of property you'll be offered will be based on housing need and depend upon your household size and composition. Assessment of need will be based on the Heygate rehousing policy that includes provision for offering an extra bedroom to households who qualify.

#### **Design and construction standards**

The council is currently in the process of selecting the best housing association or group of housing associations to develop the Heygate replacement homes at Elephant and Castle. Housing associations will be expected to comply with a list of standards set by the council. These are described below:

#### **General design standards**

The new homes will be expected to comply with the council's design standards as well as those of the Housing Corporation (the organisation which oversees and regulates housing associations). These standards cover such things as the internal layout of your home, storage provision, and numbers of electric sockets to be provided in each room.

## **Building Regulations**

Building regulations cover such things as building materials, construction standards and sound insulation. All new buildings have to comply with these minimum legal standards. In many cases we will require housing associations to exceed the minimum building regulation requirements.

## **Unitary Development Plan (Southwark Plan)**

The UDP is the statutory document that contains the council's planning policies for all new developments in the borough. The current UDP is under review and will be renamed the Southwark Plan. All of the new homes will have to comply with the design standards in the Southwark Plan.

## **Space standards**

The council has minimum space standards that will ensure the new housing association homes have good-sized rooms and compare well overall with properties at Heygate Estate.

## **Accessibility standards**

All the new homes will have to comply with Lifetime Homes standards. These will ensure that homes are flexible enough to deal with any loss of mobility in later life. This will allow older people to remain in their homes for longer, reducing the need to move to sheltered housing. For example, homes built to Lifetime Homes standards need to have doorways and corridors that are wide enough for a wheelchair. In addition, between 5% and 10% of the new homes will be built to full wheelchair standards. These properties are even more accessible than Lifetime Homes and include, for example, specialist kitchens and bathrooms designed for wheelchair users.

## **Security standards**

All new developments will be required to obtain a Secured by Design award. This is a police initiative, which ensures that new homes are designed to have high security standards. To obtain a Secured by Design award, housing developments must have good quality doors and window locks and should not include any poorly lit areas or hiding places. All new flats will have secure entry-phone systems.

## **Environmental standards**

The council will be pushing to achieve the highest possible environmental standards for all new housing association developments. All new homes will be expected to obtain an Eco Homes 'Very Good' award. This will include, for example, the provision of cheap and efficient heating systems and water conserving devices, high levels of insulation and natural ventilation, and maximising the use of sunlight. The council will also ensure that housing associations restrict the use of building materials that have a negative impact on the environment.

## **Heating and hot water**

Depending on the size and locations of the housing sites, new homes may have district heating and hot water. All others will have individual boilers. In either case, the new installations will be energy efficient to enhance the high standards of insulation.

## **Parking**

Parking provision will be restricted on the new developments, particularly within the more central areas of the regeneration scheme. This in accordance with the London Mayor's priorities for encouraging the use of public transport and reducing the number of car journeys in central London. Some of the developments may have no parking provision at all, and some will only have street parking, within the CPZ (Controlled Parking Zone), for which you will need to buy an annual permit. Where car parking is provided, it will be limited to 25% (one space for every four dwellings) as contained within the Southwark Plan and the Mayor's London Plan.

There will be no garages built on any of the new developments. If you currently rent a garage at Heygate Estate and wish to move to a housing association property you will need to make alternative arrangements for the storage of your car if you don't wish to park on the street.

## **Option two - a council home**

### **General description**

If you decide to remain a council tenant you will be made an offer of an existing council property. It is very unlikely to be a newly built property and it could be located either on an estate or on a street. Southwark has a large variety of types of accommodation, but the vast majority of them are located within estates. The type of home you are offered may depend upon any medical needs you may have. For example, you are unlikely to be offered a ground floor property unless you have a medical reason for needing one. The internal layout of individual flats varies across the borough and within estates, and so the property you are offered may differ from your current home on the Heygate estate. For example if you currently live in a maisonette there is no guarantee that you will be offered a similar type of property elsewhere in the borough.

### **Property size**

The size of property you are offered will be based on housing need and depend upon your household size and composition. Assessment of need will be based on the Heygate rehousing policy that includes provision for offering an extra bedroom to households who qualify.

### **Heating**

Depending upon the age and type of property you are offered, the heating in your council home will either be a district heating system similar to the one at the Heygate estate, or an individual boiler or other appliance. If the property has individual heating and hot water appliances, you will have to pay your own fuel bills directly to the energy supplier.

### **Parking**

If you are allocated a home on an estate with a parking scheme, you will have the opportunity to apply for a parking permit to park on the estate. You may also be able to apply to rent a garage if these are available on the estate. Otherwise you will have the option of parking your car on the street. In Southwark most areas now operate a CPZ (Controlled Parking Zone) for which you will be required to buy an annual permit. The Southwark Parking Shop at 364 Old Kent Road will be able to provide you with more information about any Controlled Parking Zones operating in your areas of choice.

## Section C.3

# The new housing sites



## Section C.3

# What's in your area

### **Area 1: St. George's area**

- Area west of central Elephant and Castle
- St Mary's park - a major new green space
- Contains site of proposed new city academy, where the leisure centre is today
- Easy access to buses, tube stations, trains and the new London tram
- A few minutes walk from the new Elephant and Castle town centre
- Walking distance from the Thames and eleven different Thames crossings

### **Area 2: Harper Road**

- Area north of central Elephant and Castle
- Close access to mature green spaces at Newington Gardens and Dickens Square Park
- Existing school at Geoffrey Chaucer earmarked for major improvement. Joseph Lancaster primary school located on Harper Road
- Local shops and facilities, community centre, adventure playground, mosque

### **Area 3: Rodney Road**

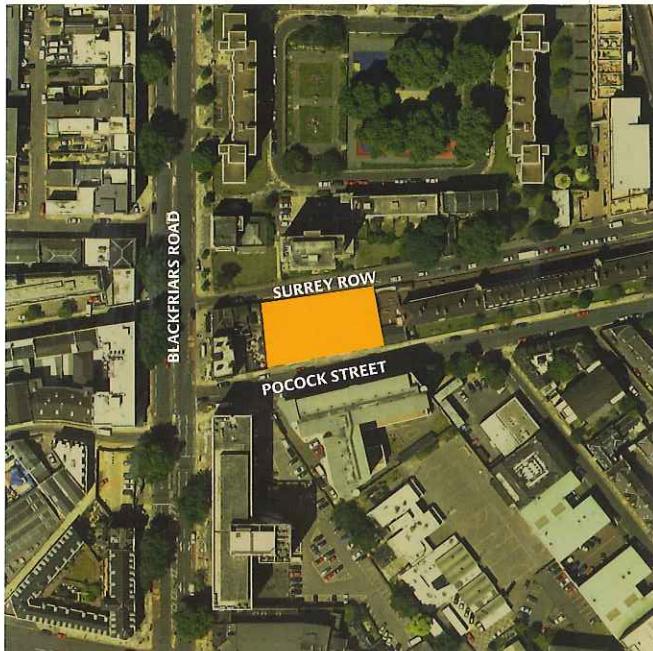
- Area east of central Elephant and Castle area
- A number of green spaces including Salisbury Road Park, Nursery Row Park and Victory Park
- Good access to Walworth Road, East Street markets and the range of shops and facilities in this area
- A number of local schools
- Excellent bus connections and walking distance to Elephant and Castle underground station

### **Area 4: South Newington**

- Kennington Park - open space with various play and recreation facilities
- A short bus trip or walk to Camberwell town centre
- Secondary school
- Direct bus links to Brixton town centre
- Near Oval Cricket Ground
- Great bus links and very close to Oval underground station.

## Section C.3

### Area 1: Pocock Street site



#### Site location

Between Pocock Street and Surrey Row, near Blackfriars Road

#### Likely mix of units

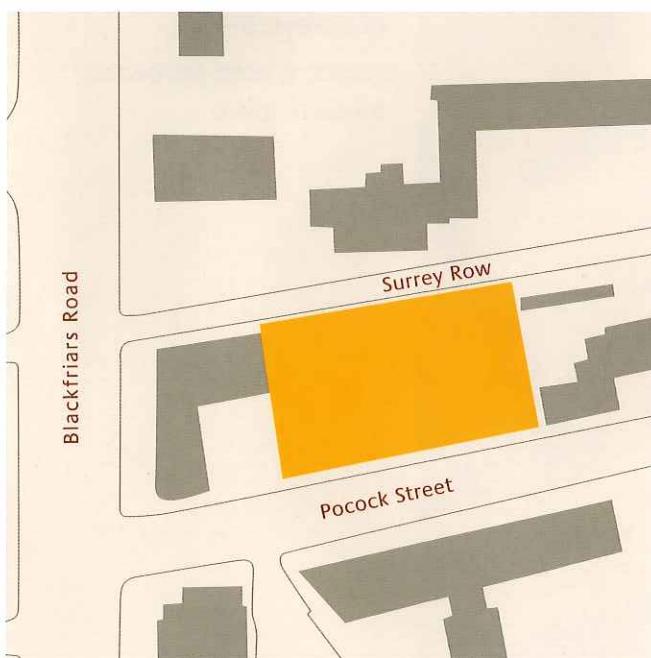
Size	Type	Approx no.
1 bed	Flat	16
2 bed	Flat/house	32
3 bed	Flat	0
3 bed	House	0
4 bed	House	0

#### Unit specification

Approximate number of units: 58

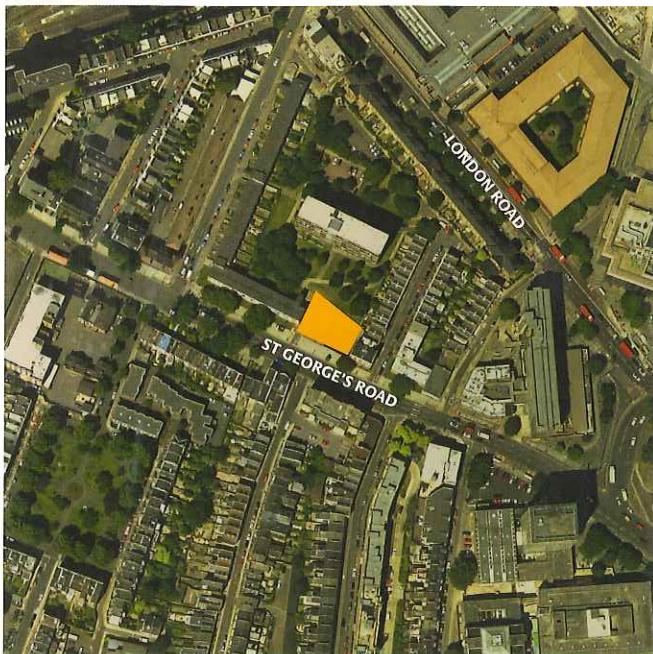
Approximate number of storeys: 8

Adjacent uses: residential and shops/restaurants



## Section C.3

# Area 1: St Georges Road site



### Site location

Frontage site to  
St Georges Road, adjacent  
to Prospect House

### Likely mix of units

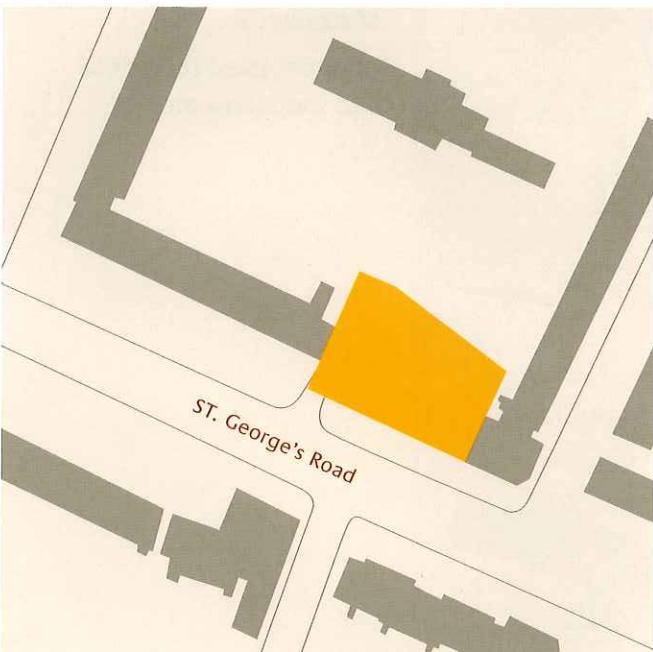
Size	Type	Approx no.
1 bed	flat	7
2 bed	flat/house	7
3 bed	flat	0
3 bed	house	0
4 bed	house	0

### Unit specification

Approximate number  
of units: 14

Approximate number  
of storeys: 3-4

Adjacent uses: residential/  
amenity space



## Section C.3

# Area 1: Library Street site



### Site location

Between Library Street  
and King James Street

### Likely mix of units

Size	Type	Approx no.
1 bed	flat	20
2 bed	flat/house	23
3 bed	flat	0
3 bed	house	0
4 bed	house	8

### Unit specification

Approximate number  
of units: 51

Approximate number  
of storeys: 4-5

Adjacent uses: residential  
and mixed use



## Section C.3

# Area 1: New Kent Road site



### Site location

Adjacent to elevated railway at western end of New Kent Road and north of the core area of regeneration at Elephant and Castle

### Likely mix of units

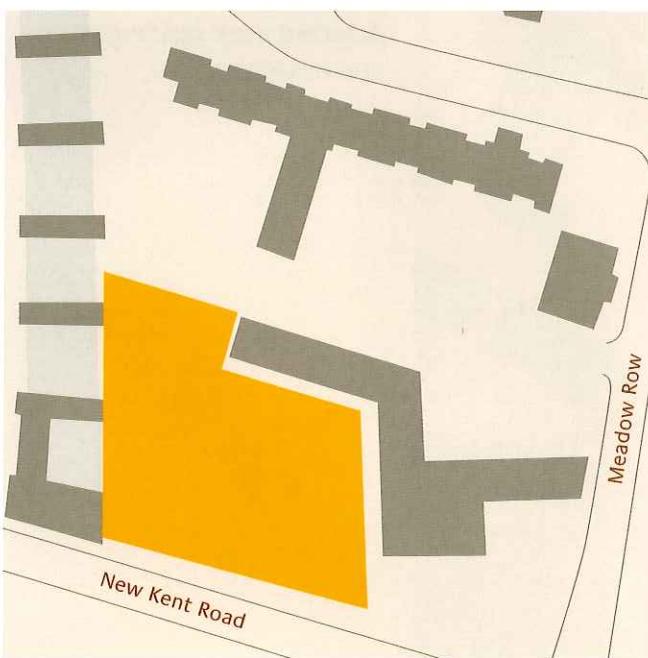
Size	Type	Approx no.
1 bed	flat	6
2 bed	flat/house	18
3 bed	flat	18
3 bed	house	0
4 bed	house	0

### Unit specification

Approximate number of units: 42

Approximate number of storeys: 6

Adjacent uses: residential



## Section C.3

# Area 2: Dickens Square site



### Site location

North of Rockingham Estate  
and north of Harper Road

### Likely mix of units

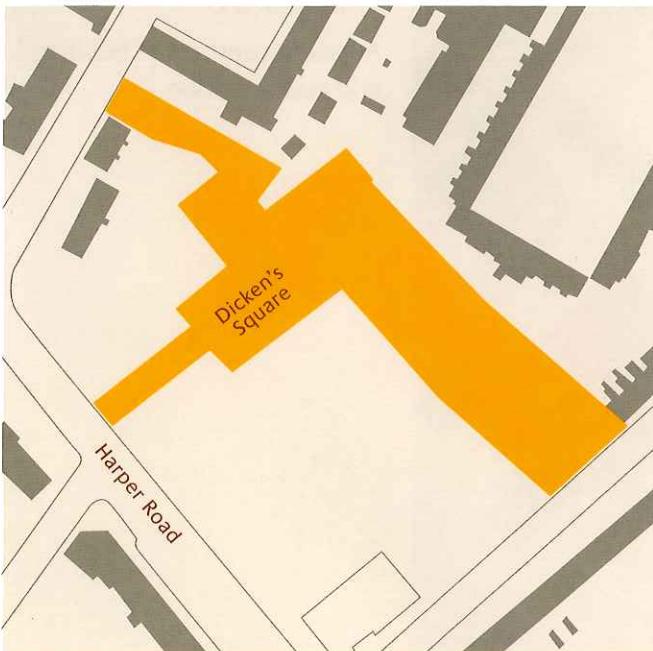
Size	Type	Approx no.
1 bed	Flat	44
2 bed	Flat/house	42
3 bed	Flat	5
3 bed	House	1
4 bed	House	2

### Unit specification

Approximate number  
of units: 94

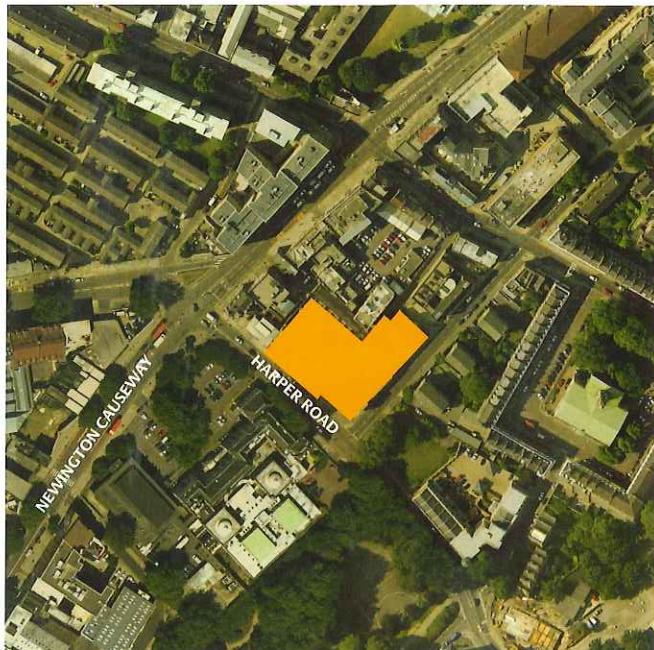
Approximate number  
of storeys: 4-5

Adjacent uses: community  
centre, adventure playground,  
Dickens's Square Park and  
mosque (under construction)



## Section C.3

### Area 2: Harper Road site



#### Site location

At the western end of Harper Road, east of Borough high street

#### Likely mix of units

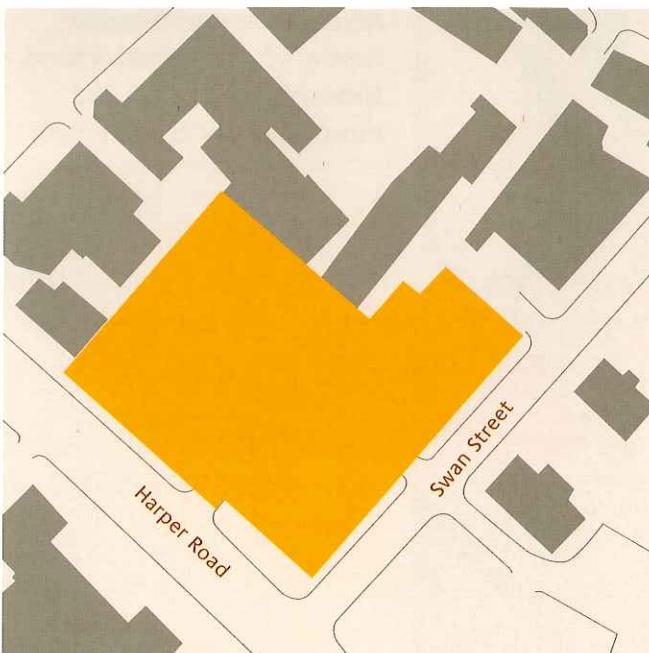
Size	Type	Approx no.
1 bed	Flat	0
2 bed	Flat/house	36
3 bed	Flat	12
3 bed	House	10
4 bed	House	2

#### Unit specification

Approximate number of units: 60

Approximate number of storeys: 3-6

Adjacent uses: court building and police station



## Section C.3

# Area 2: Harper Road site



### Site location

North of Harper Road,  
southeast of Dickens  
Square Park

### Likely mix of units

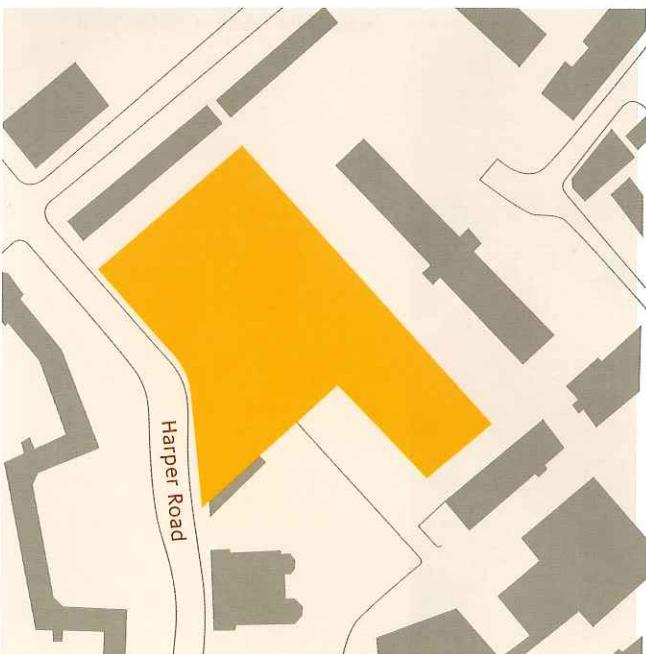
Size	Type	Approx no.
1 bed	Flat	33
2 bed	Flat/house	62
3 bed	Flat	23
3 bed	House	0
4 bed	House	4

### Unit specification

Approximate number  
of units: 122

Approximate number  
of storeys: 5-6

Adjacent uses:  
residential and schools



## Section C.3

# Area 3: Leroy Street site



### Site location

East of Bricklayers Arms roundabout

### Likely mix of units

Unit size	Type	Approx no.
1 bed	Flat	4
2 bed	Flat/house	8
3 bed	Flat	5
3 bed	House	3
4 bed	House	0

### Unit specification

Approximate number of units: 20

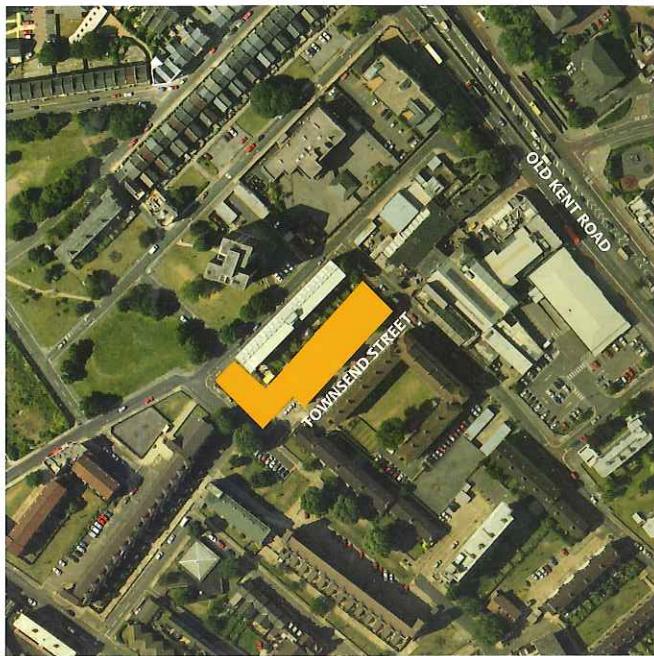
Approximate number of storeys: 3-4

Adjacent uses: residential



## Section C.3

# Area 3: Townsend Street site



### Site location

Adjacent to Townsend Street,  
east of Rodney Road.

### Likely mix of units

Size	Type	Approx no.
1 bed	Flat	0
2 bed	Flat/house	32
3 bed	Flat	26
3 bed	House	0
4 bed	House	0

### Unit specification

Approximate number  
of units: 58

Approximate number  
of storeys: 5-6

Adjacent uses: residential



## Section C.3

### Area 3: Stead Street site



#### Site location

Stead Street/Wadding Street  
south of Rodney Road and  
north of East Street Park.

#### Likely mix of units

Size	Type	Approx no.
1 bed	Flat	54
2 bed	Flat/house	114
3 bed	Flat	42
3 bed	House	8
4 bed	House	0

#### Unit specification

Approximate number  
of units: 218

Approximate number  
of storeys: 4-6

Adjacent uses: residential



## Section C.3

# Area 3: Rodney Road site



### Site location

Corner of Rodney Road and Orb Street.

### Likely mix of units

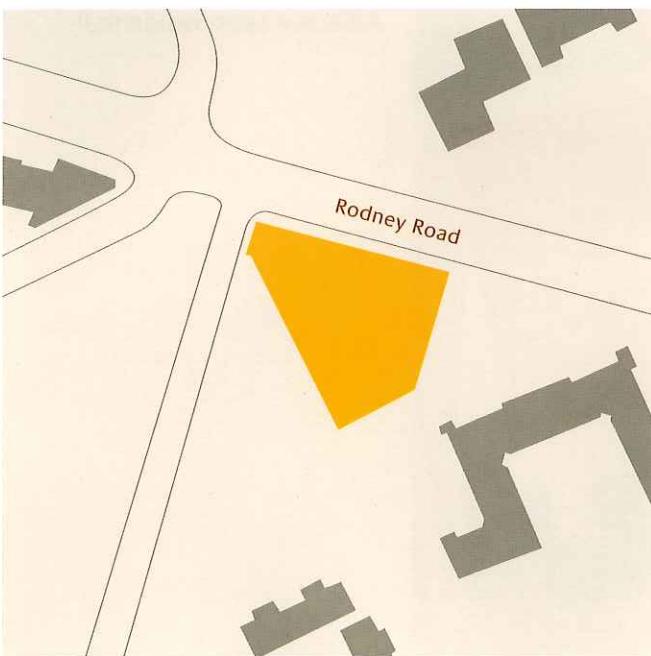
Size	Type	Approx no.
1 bed	Flat	15
2 bed	Flat/house	10
3 bed	Flat	5
3 bed	House	0
4 bed	House	0

### Unit specification

Approximate number of units: 30

Approximate number of storeys: 6

Adjacent uses: residential



## Section C.3

# Area 3: Welsford Street site



### Site location

North of Lynton Road, south of Southwark Park Road.

### Likely mix of units

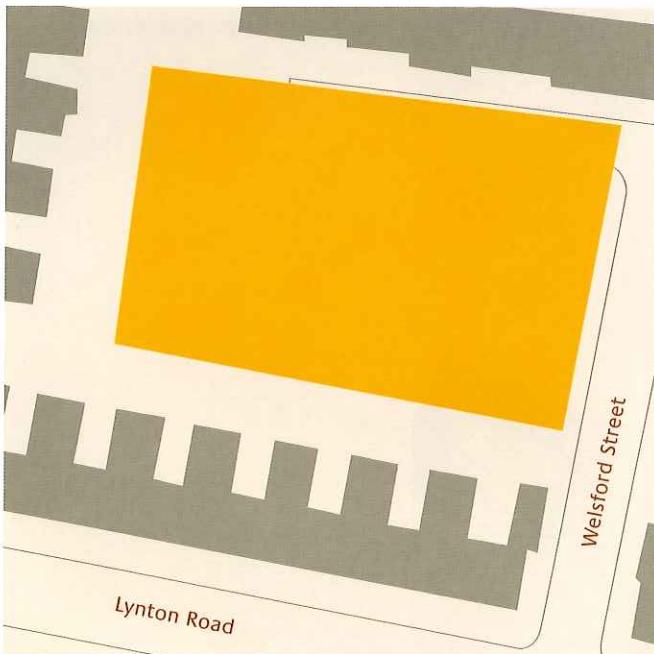
Size	Type	Approx no.
1 bed	Flat	15
2 bed	Flat/house	10
3 bed	Flat	5
3 bed	House	0
4 bed	House	0

### Unit specification

Approximate number of units: 48

Approximate number of storeys: 3-5

Adjacent uses: residential



## Section C.3

# Area 3: Brandon Street site



### Site location

Adjacent to Brandon Street,  
between Larcom Street and  
Charleston Street

### Likely mix of units

Size	Type	Approx no.
1 bed	Flat	0
2 bed	Flat/house	9
3 bed	Flat	9
3 bed	House	0
4 bed	House	0

### Unit specification

Approximate number  
of units: 18

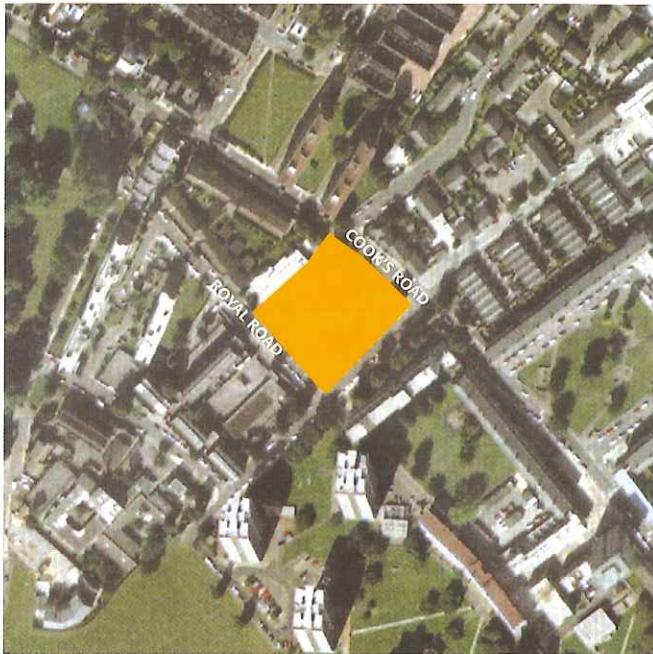
Approximate number  
of storeys: 4-5

Adjacent uses: residential



## Section C.3

# Area 4: Royal Road site



### Site location

East of Kennington Road, north of Camberwell New Road.

### Likely mix of units

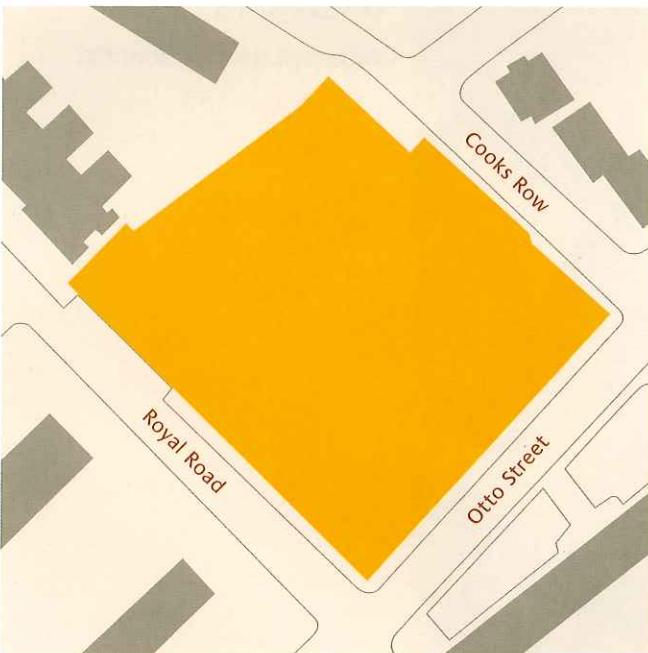
Size	Type	Approx no.
1 bed	Flat	30
2 bed	Flat/house	16
3 bed	Flat	17
3 bed	House	9
4 bed	House	4

### Unit specification

Approximate number of units: 76

Approximate number of storeys: 3-6

Adjacent uses: residential



## Section C.3

# Area 4: Camberwell New Road site



### Site location

Bounded by Camberwell New Road and Bolton Crescent.

### Likely mix of units

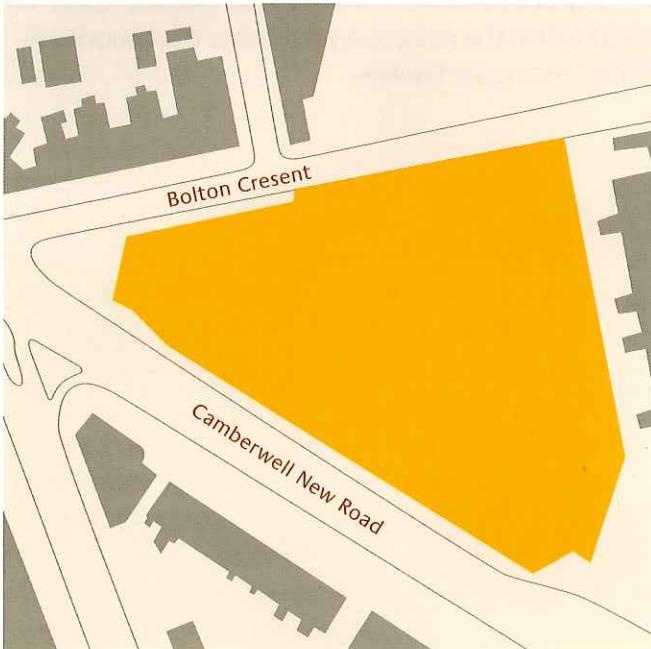
Size	Type	Approx no.
1 bed	Flat	26
2 bed	Flat/house	54
3 bed	Flat	21
3 bed	House	6
4 bed	House	5

### Unit specification

Approximate number of units: 112

Approximate number of storeys: 5-6 and 8

Adjacent uses: residential, retail and public open space



## Section C.3

# Elephant and Castle new housing sites: The role of private developments

**In addition to new homes to be built on council owned sites, some of the new homes which may be made available to Heygate tenants will be built by private developers. Homes provided in this way may provide Heygate tenants with additional opportunities for quality housing in the local area and an increased choice of locations.**

Government planning policy requires all private housing developments made up of more than 14 units to provide some affordable homes. These homes are a requirement of planning consents granted by local authorities and are secured through binding legal agreements, known as section 106 agreements.

Private, or section 106, developments are built in partnership with housing associations and the affordable homes contained within them are owned and managed by housing associations. If you are rehoused on one of these developments you will be given a housing association assured tenancy agreement. The council would expect the developments to conform to Housing Corporation design standards.

The redevelopment of some sites in private ownership at the Elephant and Castle, such as Steedman Street fall into this category and will produce new affordable homes. Assuming that these developments are completed within the re-housing timetable the council will in the first instance make them available to Heygate tenants.

## Section C.4

# Programme and timetable

### Phasing plan

The rehousing is proposed to take place on a phased basis starting on the south side of the estate and moving northwards towards the New Kent Road. This sequence and timescale is an indication only. Many things can change before and during the regeneration, and we'll keep you updated about any changes to the phasing plan through meetings and the Heygate newsletter.

The speed at which we can rehouse tenants from each block will depend upon how quickly our housing association partner (or partners) are able to build the new homes on each of the new housing sites. At this stage we are unable to say which of the sites will be completed first, but there will be a continuous programme of building within each of the four areas throughout the whole redevelopment period. This means that at every phase of the scheme there will be sufficient homes available to allow people choice of all areas.

It is estimated that the whole rehousing process will take about five years. The council will maintain the estate throughout the entire decanting process and will ensure that the transition goes as smoothly as possible for residents.

At this stage, we are projecting that tenants will be visited and rehoused in the sequence outlined below.

Phase	Block	Visit from rehousing team	Approximate rehousing date
1	Swanbourne, Wansey Street, Kingshill	Nov – Dec 2004	2006-2007
2a	Claydon, Risborough	Dec 2004 – Feb 2005	2007-2008
2b	43-53 Rodney Rd, Wingrave	Jan – Mar 2005	2007-2009
3a	Chearsley, Cuddington	Mar – Apr 2005	2008-2009
3b	Marston, Ashenden	Apr-Jun 2005	2008-2010

Please note that the above dates are estimates only and it is possible that some blocks may move from one phase to another. The referencing exercise will give us a much greater understanding of how the overall programme will be delivered. We will then keep you updated with programme information on a regular basis.

## Section C.5

# Alternative rehousing options

**From now until the decant process actively begins, any tenant may register for a transfer from the Heygate in the normal way, or consider any alternative rehousing schemes which are currently available. These are described in detail below. Your application under any of these schemes will be considered alongside other competing demands and will not receive any extra priority because of the Heygate scheme. Also, you will not be eligible for compensation payments for home loss and disturbance if you move before the phased decanting of your block commences.**

**Please note that even if you wish to pursue any of the alternative rehousing routes in the meantime, you will still select one of the two main options offered as part of the regeneration project. This is to ensure that the council is able to make you an offer of housing within the regeneration scheme if you have not managed to secure rehousing by any alternative route. In this event you will still be eligible for an offer under whichever one of the two main options you have chosen. It is not likely that you will be able to pursue any of these options once the rehousing of your block becomes active. Your rehousing project officer will be able to give you further advice on this.**

### **HOMES**

This is a scheme, run jointly with other local authorities, which can help people move to other areas of the country, mainly to sheltered housing or elderly person accommodation. You will need to complete a separate application form to register for this scheme.

To qualify you must be able to demonstrate a local connection in the area you wish to move to. Southwark is limited to only a few nominations under this scheme and it is up to the other councils whether they accept you. In general the most popular places are the most difficult to move to, e.g. London and the South East.

### **Seaside and Country Homes Scheme**

This is a scheme run by North British Housing Association and is restricted to those aged over 60. There are a limited number of bungalows and flats outside the London area including some coastal areas, for example Bognor Regis.

### **Changing Places Scheme**

This scheme offers Southwark tenants an opportunity to move to the north of England, parts of the Midlands, South Wales and Scotland where there are more council and housing association properties available for letting. This scheme is open to tenants on the transfer list.

### **Under-occupation scheme**

Tenants can pursue rehousing under this initiative if they currently occupy a property that is larger than their actual assessed need and would like to move to a smaller home. To qualify for this scheme you must be willing to give up two or more spare bedrooms and want to stay in Southwark. You must currently be under-occupying:

- a four bedroom property, or a property that is larger than your need by two or more bedrooms;
- a three bedroom property if you are willing to move to a bedsit or a one bedroom property.

You can be offered a property with one bedroom more than you need if you currently occupy a property of four bedrooms or larger but under-occupy the property by two or more rooms.

Reasonable removal expenses will be offered on a sliding scale depending on the size of property you are vacating.

Please ask your project officer for the leaflet 'Small is Beautiful' (under occupation leaflet).

### **Sheltered Housing**

You may already live in sheltered housing at Heygate, or decide that you want to move into a sheltered housing scheme. Sheltered housing is usually a group of flats designed for older people to live independently but linked to an alarm system in case of emergency. Most schemes have someone on site that is responsible for the day-to-day running of the scheme and can help to organise any extra support you may need.

If you wish to remain with the council and are over 60, the council has a number of existing sheltered schemes throughout the borough that may suit you. If you wish to go to a housing association property but think you would prefer sheltered housing please let the referencing team know of this. New specialist housing for older people will be built as part of the scheme but the plans are yet to be finalised.

## **Home Ownership**

As an alternative to the rehousing routes described above, you may wish to consider home ownership. If you are unable to find and buy your own home through the open market, you might be able to get help with low cost home ownership through one of the home ownership schemes which will be available as part of the Elephant and Castle regeneration project. There are two main types of home ownership scheme known as 'shared ownership' and 'homebuy'. These are described below:

### **Shared Ownership**

Shared ownership is where you buy a share of your home and rent the remaining share, usually from a housing association. This is available to all tenants and residents of the estate.

Most housing associations develop shared ownership properties. For further information you should contact the housing office and ask for the leaflet entitled 'Low Cost Ownership schemes in Southwark'.

### **Homebuy Scheme**

In addition tenants can apply to purchase their own home under the Homebuy scheme, which is managed by Tower Housing Association. This scheme allows you to buy a property on the open market anywhere in England with a subsidy. However there is a limit to the size and price of the property you may purchase dependent on your family composition. This scheme is not available to existing leaseholders.

You can ask the neighbourhood office for a leaflet or you can contact Tower Housing Association's marketing department on 0208 850 9686.

## Section C.6

# An offer of housing

**This section describes what happens after you have registered for housing and the council has identified a suitable property to offer to you.**

### **The offer and nomination process**

How this works will depend on whether you are offered a council home or one from a housing association. If you are requesting a housing association property then the council will nominate you for an offer to the relevant housing association.

The type of property you will be offered will depend on the information you have provided on your application form. It is essential therefore, to make sure that this information is correct.

Contact a member of the rehousing project team on 020 7525 2620 if you have questions.

### **Housing associations**

#### **Pre-allocations by housing associations**

When you are nominated to a housing association, it is most likely that the property identified for you will still be under construction. The reason for this early nomination is firstly to reserve the property for you, and also to give you the opportunity to choose things like decorations and kitchen finishes. If you have been nominated to a housing association and you receive a letter about pre-allocation, you should contact them quickly. Builders may be waiting for instructions and any delay could hold up the completion of your home, or you could end up with options you do not like.

#### **Nomination to a housing association**

Once the council has nominated you to a housing association they will contact you directly. There are normally four stages to this process:

1. They will contact you for an interview. You may have to complete one of their application forms so that you can be entered on their records.
2. You will be contacted to choose the finishes in the new property.
3. You will be invited to view the property when it is completed.
4. You can then sign the tenancy agreement for your new home.

Although you will be dealing directly with the housing association, you can still also contact your council project officer at the local housing office for assistance.

## **Southwark Council**

### **Pre-allocations by the council**

The council may pre-allocate a property for you when it becomes empty. This is to reserve it for you while the work is completed to make it ready for you to occupy.

It is very important that you attend your local housing office as soon as you receive an offer or pre-allocation letter. An officer will complete the details and ask you to sign and date the letter, and provide your contact details.

The signing of the pre-allocation reserves the property for you. At this stage you won't be required to accept the tenancy for the property, but failure to sign the pre-allocation could result in you losing the offer.

### **Offers by the council**

Once your property is ready you will be invited by letter or telephone to view it. At this stage you'll be required to make your decision to accept the property, and once that's done you can sign the tenancy agreement.

### **Refusal and Appeals**

We try to make sure that the property we offer you will be one that you can accept because it meets all your housing needs. Occasionally though, you might not be happy with what has been offered. Your offer letter will be accompanied by an explanatory leaflet entitled 'An Offer of Accommodation from Southwark Council (refusals and appeals policy)', which contains information on the refusal and appeals policy. Before you make any final decisions on whether you wish to refuse an offer, you should take the opportunity to discuss any questions or concerns you have with your project officer.

### **The court process**

The redevelopment scheme for Heygate Estate, as part of the regeneration of the Elephant and Castle area, requires that all of the existing residents move off the estate, in a phased programme of decanting. The council will be making sure that offers of rehousing are reasonable alternatives to your current home. However if necessary, the council will take legal action against tenants for possession. This is a last resort option.

If the council needs to take possession proceedings, a Notice Seeking Possession would first have to be served under Ground 10 of the Housing Act 1985, and then an application made to the county court. The court cannot give possession to the council without first being satisfied that suitable alternative accommodation is available to you.

### **So what happens when you accept an offer of a new home?**

One of the most important things you will need to do as soon as you accept an offer of a new home is to tell your project officer. There are several reasons for this.

1. You may be informed about your nomination before the housing office.
2. We will be able to help with arrangements for your removal
3. We can plan to make your old home safe and secure
4. We can arrange to pay your home loss compensation.

### **Help with your removals**

Whether you are rehoused under our scheme or you find accommodation by one of the other initiatives, you must still terminate your existing tenancy in writing. As soon as you get an offer you should let your project officer know. The project officer will then make the necessary arrangements for your removal and for the disconnection and reconnection of services

### **What you should do when you are moving out**

When you move out of your old property you must give the council vacant possession. This means that all occupants have left the property with all their belongings, and the property is cleared of rubbish and unwanted furniture. You should secure the property using all locks to the property, including window locks, and then without delay return these keys to the Rodney Road Housing Office where you will be asked to sign a termination of tenancy form. You will be given a copy for your records, which you must keep as your only proof that you have handed in your keys. We will then inspect the property to make sure that you have left it empty.

If you delay in returning keys, this will hold up your compensation payments (described below). Failure to clear your home of rubbish and furniture could result in deductions being made from your compensation payments. Please note that if there are any difficulties, for example any people left in the property, you will continue to be responsible for rent or any other charges until the council gets possession. This will also delay your compensation payments and if legal proceedings are necessary to recover vacant possession, you may also be liable for any costs relating to this. The council will investigate any suspected allegations of unauthorised occupation or property misuse.

### **Paying you compensation**

Secure tenants being rehoused by the council as part of the redevelopment are entitled to compensation for the loss of their home. This is known as 'Home Loss' and is currently fixed at £3,400. You will also receive compensation for disturbance. This disturbance payment covers the costs of your removals, disconnections and reconnections. This is explained in detail in section C.7.

If you are in arrears of rent when you move out of your old home, the council may use your Home Loss payment to offset these arrears.

### **Unwanted furniture and bulk refuse**

You may have furniture that you do not wish to take to your new home and that you would like to donate to a worthy cause. The Shaftesbury Society collects unwanted furniture for people in need. You can contact them on 0207 737 7475.

Bulk furniture can be disposed of via the council's bulk refuse service. The Environmental Contact Centre can be contacted on 0207 525 2000 Monday to Friday during office hours. Please note that the service currently has a two-week delay for collections, so you will need to arrange this in advance. From time to time, especially during periods of high demand, the waiting time may be longer than two weeks.

### **Rent arrears**

Tenants in a decent scheme who are in arrears with their rent payments are eligible for a transfer providing:

- the tenant is complying with the terms of a suspended possession order.
- no outright possession order has been granted to the council.

Please note that if a court order has been granted for possession of your property, you are considered a tolerated trespasser until the possession order is discharged and all costs recovered by the council. If you fall behind with your payments you will be in breach of the possession order and the council will have no alternative but to apply to the court for an order to evict you from your home.

Tenants in rent arrears should make an appointment to see their income officer (020 7525 2620) to confirm that payments are being made in an acceptable way.

Please note that any outstanding rent arrears at the date of tenancy termination may be deducted from your Home Loss payment.

Tenants in rent arrears also do not qualify for consideration for the extra bedroom policy that is available as part of the scheme.